

COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

December 2, 2015

YORK,ss

At a regular meeting of the County Commissioners of the County of York, begun and holden at the York County Government Building in Alfred, within and for the County of York, being held on Wednesday, December 2, 2015 A. D. at 4:30 P. M.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Sallie Chandler
Marston D. Lovell
Richard R. Dutremble
Michael J. Cote
Gary Sinden

County Manager Gregory Zinser was present at the meeting.

All present were invited to rise and salute the flag of the United States.

Call Meeting to Order

YOU ARE INVITED TO RISE AND SALUTE THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

12-02-15 ITEM

1 PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)

2 TO REVIEW AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MEETING OF NOVEMBER 18, 2015

Commissioner Dutremble motioned to approve the minutes. Commissioner Cote seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

3 HEAR NCEU GRIEVANCES (2)

(May be in executive session)

This item was postponed until the first meeting in January.

4 HEAR ANY REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Chair Chandler reported that some of the Commissioners and County Manager had attended National Adoption Day held in York County Probate Court. She added that it was a very nice event.

Commissioner Cote informed all present that there will be a Maine County Commissioner Association meeting next week (December 9th).

5 TO HEAR ANY REPORTS OF THE COUNTY MANAGER

6 OLD BUSINESS

7 NEW BUSINESS

- a. York County Advocacy Funding/Meeting (Thursday, December 10th at 6:30 in Sanford City Council Chambers)

The County Manager reminded the Commissioners that in the past the Commissioners have approved funding of half of the costs of this organization while Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission takes care of obtaining the remaining half from the other cities and towns in York County. This year the cost is \$4,400.00 so he is asking the Commissioners to approve \$2,200.00. Topics of interest that will be discussed at the meeting include County jail funding and the location of the new York County courthouse.

Commissioner Lovell motioned to authorize payment of \$2,200.00 to the York County Advocacy. Commissioner Sinden seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

Commissioner Lovell added that this effort also benefits the county as it's a visible service to our municipalities.

County Manager Zinser discussed some of the agenda items. He stated that EB-5 is on the agenda although it is not applicable to the County anymore but that there is a strong push at the State level to designate the entire State of Maine as an EB-5 center.

In regards to the jail funding agenda topic, Mr. Zinser stated that in his conversations with the town leaders they want to support us in obtaining additional funds but do not want their taxes increased. He reminded the Commissioners that at the last meeting they took formal action to support supplemental funding only at this time. Now, guidance is needed on the amount that should be requested. The County Manager will contact Maine County Commissioner Association Executive Director, Rosie Kulow, to confirm what the amount requested should be. Commissioner Sinden questioned if the amount should be \$2.4 million. County Manager Zinser agreed but wondered if that amount includes fine and surcharge money. He added that he feels these monies should not be included. Commissioner Lovell commented that *"we need to pay very close attention that the number includes full budgeting for overtime and medications."* The County Manager commented that this will be reviewed by the Commissioners at one of their meetings soon.

Commissioner Sinden commented that his understanding of LD 186 is that the sending jails would have to cover any extraordinary medical costs; correct? County Manager Zinser responded that was true but it assumes we are taking prisoners which we are not. He added that there is a strong push for boarding and to do away with caps. There was no unanimous decision at the recent meeting. The only item agreed upon was the supplemental funding, stated Mr. Zinser. Commissioner Sinden added, *"I would not trust them to have another shot at it. They did so poorly and it was a terrible outcome. If they have another shot at it, it would only hurt us more."*

Commissioner Cote commented that is why it's important for Commissioners to attend this advocacy meeting on Thursday, December 10th.

Commissioner Lovell also requested that the Commissioners receive the supplemental number that will be requested via e-mail.

- b. Town of Alfred Meeting re: possible location of new courthouse (December 8th at 6:00 p.m. at the Conant Chapel on Kennebunk Road)

County Manager Zinser explained that Chief Justice Saufley and Court Administrator, Ted Glesner, met with him and two members of the Alfred Select board to discuss the possibility of building the new courthouse on land adjacent the jail. He continued that he thought the meeting went well and that, in his view, the cost of giving the State 5 to 6 acres of land is minimal compared to the ancillary benefits for both the State and County. Mr. Zinser reminded all that the State still has to go through a formal process. York County would have to develop a proposal which would go to the Board of Commissioners for approval prior to us submitting it to the State. He continued that there is also a strong push to get the new courthouse closer to I-95.

Commissioner Lovell asked the County Manager if he was confident that it would only be 6 acres that the State would want of the County land. He also asked if it would be feasible to simply add on to the current courthouse.

The County Manager replied that he doesn't know yet about the quantity of land and it is not feasible to add on to the current courthouse. He added that the District Attorney would like her department in that office, also but that he is not sure that is affordable.

Commissioner Sinden stated that he has heard it mentioned several times that they have an interest in being closer to I-95 and asked if the County Manager had heard what the advantage to this would be? The County Manager replied that he had not but that it is a political decision and he has heard there is a strong push from the legislative delegation for the Biddeford/Saco area as well as the Wells area.

- c. General discussions with Sheriff King
 - i. Maine Drug Enforcement Agency position –Sheriff King addressed the Board and spoke regarding this matter. He explained that this position will be a force multiplier for York County and this will be a budgeted position-not a grant. The Sheriff added that this gives us a voice by having our own person on the task force and it is a way to continue to help with the heroin problem in York County. Sheriff King requested that if he is able to go forward with this, could he fill the position that will be left vacant immediately? Commissioner Dutremble clarified that by filling this DEA position you will be one position short and need to fill it right away. The Sheriff replied this was correct.

Commissioner Dutremble motioned to approve the hiring of an additional officer due to the vacancy caused by the assignment of the DEA position. Commissioner Lovell seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

ii. K-9 position- County Manager Zinser explained that this is an exciting opportunity for the Sheriff's office to obtain a narcotics dog. Sheriff King stated that this dog would be very effective in finding drugs in the jail facility. He added that one of the Corrections Officers has done a lot of research and has found a dog for free from Throwaway Dogs. The cost for the first year will be minimal explained Sheriff King and he added that he is not looking for an additional position at this time as the dog handler would be a task assignment. The Sheriff also informed the Commissioners that County Patrol Association has signed off and has no concerns with this item. Commissioner Lovell asked if this dog would only be used inside the jail. The Sheriff replied that was correct as this dog has been trained for drugs such as heroin, opiates and suboxone. The dog will not be aggressive-simply a drug sniffing dog. Commissioner Lovell asked if the deputy associated with the MDEA would be able to use this dog in searching for drug dealers (drugs). Sheriff King explained that the dog handler might not be a certified law enforcement officer and that the State Police has at least two canines that can be called in if needed.

Commissioner Sinden asked if \$10,000.00 a year for expenses is an accurate number. Sheriff King stated that should be the worse case scenario and added that he has some ideas on how to defray some of the costs. Commissioner Sinden added that he is in favor of this proposal but concerned about the jail deficit.

Commissioner Cote stated that he had spoken with a local veterinarian regarding this dog and that she is willing to give us a 15% discount on care. He added that we might want to consider pet insurance. Also, Commissioner Cote mentioned that he had spoken with North Berwick's police chief about their canine program. Sheriff King responded that North Berwick Officer Pelkey has agreed to mentor our dog handler. Sheriff King informed all that Throwaway Dogs is delivering a dog to the Lewiston area on December 15th and is willing to drop off the dog we will be obtaining. Otherwise, a trip to Philadelphia to pick up the dog will be necessary. The County Manager stated that there are a few loose ends that need to be tied up prior to accepting the dog but that this could most likely happen.

Commissioner Cote motioned to approve the K-9 program and the acquisition of a dog from Throwaway Dogs. Commissioner Dutremble seconded the motion.

Discussion: Commissioner Lovell asked what other personnel costs would be involved. Sheriff King replied that there would not be any now as the position will be a task assignment. If the program is successful, we might revisit in the future. The County Manager did clarify that the Union contracts do call for certain compensations for canine handlers. He added that we would be looking for the Union to waive the compensation provision in order to implement the program at this time as we do not know how successful the program is going to be. Commissioner Lovell asked if due to the current under manning of the jail would we not need an additional person to get the task assignment complete? Sheriff King

explained that the successful candidate would be assigned as a rover. Commissioner Cote motioned to approve the program based on the criteria the County Manager has set forth (NCEU willing to sign an MOU, look at liability aspect with our insurance carrier, pet insurance and veterinarian care).

Commissioner Dutremble removed his second on the prior motion and seconded the amended motion. Vote 5-0.

Commissioner Cote commended Sheriff King on a great job done on the K-9 program request.

iii. Uniforms- Sheriff King showed the “soft” uniform to all present. He added that they are working with the re-entry center to get someone in house to embroider the patches on the uniforms as a cost savings. The Sheriff stated that they may need some additional monies the first year to get everyone these uniforms. He told those present that he has \$25,000.00 in his uniform line in the jail budget and \$7,000.00 in the police budget. Chief Deputy Baran stated that the ballistic vests are on a grant and will alleviate a lot of hip and back problems for officers as the vests incorporate a lot of the equipment.

Commissioner Cote commented that he feels the soft uniform is a great idea for Corrections Officers but feels it diminishes the professional look of the Sheriff’s Office (deputies). He added he doesn’t believe it has the same impact on the citizenry and that he would hate to see the current uniform go away. Sheriff King responded that it is not going away and that he is responsive to the people and if there is an outcry regarding the switching to the soft uniform, he would revisit the issue.

County Manager Zinser asked the Sheriff to clarify what he meant by his statement that he might be looking for more money (in regards to new uniforms). Sheriff King replied that he is not sure he will need extra funds but he may have to do the implementation incrementally with Police Services or give the option for the officers to purchase the soft uniform on their own if they wish. The County Manager further asked the Sheriff if he has given any consideration to funding issues at the jail and has he thought about an incremental approach to the new uniforms? He clarified that although there is money in the uniform budget line there is still a deficit in the jail budget. Commissioner Lovell commented that switching to the soft uniforms will result in a cost savings over the long term. He added that we are in the jail and policing businesses over the long term.

County Manager Zinser informed the Commissioners that there was an item that came up regarding an employee that had exhausted all of their FMLA and is out of work and undergoing a serious operation. The Sheriff would like approval to grant the employee a two week emergency leave of absence. The Sheriff should have further information at the next meeting.

Commissioner Sinden motioned to grant the employee an emergency leave of absence. Commissioner Cote seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.

d. Schedule tax abatement hearing

(Recommended date December 16th)

- e. EMA Director, Art Cleaves gave an update on an exercise to take place on Wednesday, December 10, 2015 in which twenty two of York County's cities and towns will be participating in an ice storm/blizzard scenario. Central Maine Power as well as the Federal Emergency Management and State Emergency Management Agencies will be participating in the exercise. All will learn their weaknesses so that they can make corrective measures.

8 PUBLIC COMMENT(S) ON ANY ITEM(S)

9 TO CONDUCT AN EXECUTIVE SESSION ON PERSONNEL ISSUES PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. §405 (6) (A), ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (C), LABOR NEGOTIATIONS PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (D) AND CONSULTATION WITH LEGAL COUNSEL PURSUANT TO 1 M.R.S.A. § 405 (6) (E).

10 ADJOURN

Commissioner Cote motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Lovell seconded the motion. Vote 5-0.